Northwest Territories Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

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GNWT and GTC Move Forward with Devolution and Resource Revenue Negotiations - 1/12/2006

YELLOWKNIFE (1 December, 2006) - The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) held a joint leadership meeting in Inuvik on November 28, 2006 to discuss a range of issues that affect their respective organizations including a process to move forward with devolution and resource revenue sharing negotiations.

The leadership of the GNWT and the GTC agreed to work together, and in cooperation with the elected leaders of land claimant organizations throughout the Northwest Territories (NWT), to pursue the negotiation of a devolution and resource revenue sharing agreement-in-principle that:

- Ensures the transfer of the administration and control of lands, water and natural resources to the Northwest Territories: and

- Ensures northerners are the primary beneficiaries of the resource revenues derived from the development of northern resources in keeping with the commitment of Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Minister Jim Prentice.

The GNWT and GTC further agree to work together with the other land claimant organizations on an arrangement for the sharing of resource revenues based upon the principles of fairness and equity and that reflect the needs and responsibilities of all governments.

These negotiations must respect the provisions of the existing land claim agreements, including Section 21.1.6 of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement:

The Government of the Northwest Territories shall involve the Gwich'in in the development and implementation of any Northern Accord on oil and gas development in the Northwest Territories which is negotiated pursuant to the enabling agreement, dated September 5, 1988, between Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The GNWT and GTC recognize the urgency of moving these negotiations forward and reaching an Agreement-in-Principle that is a net benefit to the NWT by March 31, 2007.

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